The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1733 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 26

FACING the FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

Chicago.—Our first impression, after arriving on the scene of the Republican National Convention of 1944, is that the war completely overshadows the political preliminaries in progress here and will continue to be the decisive factor in the campaign to follow.

Wise political prognosticators, adept at detecting trends and gauging the ebb and flow of public opinion, admit they can't tell what's going to happen in November. They say it all depends on what is going to happen before November.

If the United Nations succeed in crushing Hitler's forces by the end of summer and can compel Germany to surrender unconditionally, political wiseacres believe Republican strength will be enhanced. They doubt whether the public's indisposition to change administrations in the midst of the crucial struggle against Hitler can be overcome.

Republican leaders, however, will not admit this. They insist that irritation with the policies of the present Administration and with certain wartime restrictions is widespread and will swing enough votes in November to elect the G. O. P. ticket.

Conduct of War Not An Issue

Of course, it is not our purpose to pass judgment on these views. All we're trying to do is to report some aspects of this convention which may be of interest to labor.

One of the outstanding and encouraging circumstances which we discovered is that the conduct of the war on the fighting fronts is not an issue here and probably will not be during the campaign. Republicans and Democrats alike are united in supporting the war effort and have nothing but praise for the way our military leaders are prosecuting the fight against the enemy.

Winning the war in the shortest possible time is the supreme objective of all Americans. That fact must not be overlooked when the controversies over subordinate issues wax hot. If our enemies counted on campaign bitterness to obstruct America's military plans for wiping out the Nazi-Jap menace, they will be grievously disappointed.

Winning the peace is another matter. Here there is room for wide differences of opinion, although it does not appear that any major variations of objective will meet the eye in the platforms of the two parties. They both will say they want the same things—lasting peace, maximum production, jobs for all. However, the methods proposed by the Republicans and the Democrats for attaining these objectives may be far apart.

Labor's own program for winning the peace, described in detail by AFL President William Green before the Resolutions Committee of this convention, struck a responsive note. The cordial reception given to Mr. Green was, we thought, even warmer than usual. That is, perhaps, only natural. The Republicans respect the Federation's adherence to its traditional non-partisan political policy all the more because of the CIO's dive overboard into the opposition's camp.

G. O. P. Bitter Toward CIO

The feeling here toward the CIO's Political Action Committee and its blanket endorsement of the New Deal is implacably bitter. What effect this feeling will have on labor's future is problematical. Sensible Republicans do not hold the partisan activities of CIO leaders against the workers themselves. They doubt exceedingly whether these leaders can deliver the votes of union members. But antagonism is growing against the sort of political practices indulged in by the CIO. And whether the Republicans elect their candidate for President or not in November, there is bound to be a strong movement in Congress for restrictions against direct and one-sided political campaigning by labor organizations. Legislation far more prohibitive than the Connally-Smith Act may be proposed.

This is being written before the nomination of candidates has been completed, so we can't comment on the G. O. P. standard bearers. In any case, we wouldn't want to enter into personalities for fear that our personal likes or dislikes might prevent unbiased judgment.

Our purpose is to ask the Republican candidates, whoever they may be, to state their views on outstanding national problems, and on labor issues particularly, for publication in the labor press along with similar statements from the Democratic candidates, so that the seven million members of the Federation can have the opportunity of reading and comparing the statements and form their own independent judgment on whom to support.

This is the democratic way. It is the way of an organization which has confidence in the common sense and good judgment of its members. The American Federation of Labor does not attempt to dictate to its members how they shall vote. Such methods are abhorrent to sound, democratic, American trade unionism.

Revival Of German Labor Unions Held Boon To Post-War Democracy

New York City.—Revival of a strong, democratic labor movement in Germany is an essential step toward the internal reconstruction of that country after the Nazis are defeated, the American Labor Conference on International Affairs recommended.

In a report on "Germany in the Transition Period," prepared for the conference by Hedwig Wachenheim, with the aid of a special study group, this statement appears:

"The revival of the German labor movement is essential to the development of democracy in Germany. From its origin to its defeat in 1933, the German labor movement championed a democratic form of government. It was the only large popular movement in Germany which always stood unflinchingly for democracy.

"To prevent labor from organizing would not be a punishment of the German nation for its misdeeds during the Nazi period, but would mean that labor would be kept in bondage, to the advantage of German employers and the detriment of labor in other countries which suffer from dumping if labor can be exploited anywhere in the world."

To safeguard labor's interests and supervise labor relations and conditions, the report favors the creation of an International Labor Commission, whose members would be appointed by the Director of the International Labor Office. It envisages the development of shop councils in many industries, and recommends that they be integrated with the trade unions as they were before the Nazi period. The Nazi German Labor front should be immediately disbanded, it says.

Another measure advocated in the report is the immediate dismissal of all leading government officials and their replacement by "efficient, democratically-minded persons." The report estimates at 1,700 the number of high government officials who would have to be dismissed at once. It also urges the total dissolution of the Gestapo, or Nazi secret police, and the gradual elimination of all minor Nazi officials in other government departments.

To help the German people relearn the ways of democracy, the report considers it advisable to organize regional and local committees of German citizens who opposed the Nazis. These committees could advise the population and represent it before the occupation authorities, it says.

In order to assure the speedy punishment of Nazi criminals, the report suggests that the principle of punishment in accordance with the law in force at the time the crime was committed should not be restored until all Nazi crimes have been dealt with. It recommends the early restoration of the rights of free speech and peaceful assembly, but not for active members of the Nazi movement or anyone attempting to propagate Nazi ideas.

"The repeal of the anti-Jewish laws may be taken for granted," it says.

The American Labor Conference on International Affairs is a research and study group of the American Labor movement. William Green is chairman and David Dubinsky vice-chairman.

Labor Productivity Zooms Away Up In Airframe Industry, McNutt Finds

Washington, D. C.—Technological advances and labor economies effected by management and labor have resulted in marked increases in labor productivity in airframe plants and are reflected in the speed with which the nation's aircraft schedules are being met, Paul V. McNutt' Chairman of the War Manpower Commission, announced.

Recent gains in labor productivity, if continued, should result in the entire 1944 aircraft production schedule being met with no increase in the over-all number of workers employed in airframe plants, Mr. McNutt said.

A WMC survey, the chairman said, shows that the increased productivity in the airframe industry has been beyond all expectations and is almost breath-taking in its development. The survey, he said, indicates that by December 31, 1944, the labor productivity per worker is likely to reach four times what it was in January 1941.

The monthly output of planes in terms of airframe weight will probably continue to rise steadily during the remainder of 1944, he said. Mr. McNutt said 39 percent of the labor force employed in the airframe industry consists of women.

Gen. Eisenhower Thanks AFL Workers

Washington, D. C.—In response to a cablegram informing Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower that all AFL workers were on the job throughout the country following D-Day and were determined to back up the armed forces to the limit, President William Green received the following cabled reply from the commander of the Allied invasion forces:

FROM HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER OF ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCES IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

TO MR. WILLIAM GREEN, PRESIDENT,
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

"UPON BEHALF OF THE MEN AND WOMEN IN THE ARMED FORCES UNDER MY COMMAND, I THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRIOTIC SUPPORT OF THE GREAT EFFORT TO DESTROY THE FORCES OF OPPRESSION THAT HAVE BEEN TRYING TO SUBJUGATE THE WORLD. YOUR DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE MAXIMUM PRODUCTION WITHOUT STRIKES WILL HEARTEN EVERY MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES."

EISENHOWER

No-Strike Pledge To End With War, But Union Pacts Can Replace It

Washington, D. C.—What is the future of labor's no-strike pledge? Should it be continued after the war ends? If not, what provision can be made to protect the reconversion program from damaging interruptions due to disagreements between management and labor? These questions were put to President William Green of the American Federation of Labor by such divergent publications as the Wall Street Journal and the New Leader. His reply, which is indicative of labor's policy on this important subject, follows:

By WILLIAM GREEN,
President, American Federation of Labor

Labor's no-strike pledge was made for the duration of the war. It should be terminated immediately after victory is won.

The controls to which labor has voluntarily subjected itself for the period of the war emergency constitute a form of regimentation which must not be perpetuated in America. The exercise of free and democratic relationships between labor and industry, epitomized by collective bargaining, is essential to rapid and efficient restoration of normal peacetime production programs. Coercive legislation, such as the Connally-Smith Act, or wartime machinery, such as the National War Labor Board, would have an oppressive effect after the war and would only promote strikes and disputes instead of preventing them.

The development of cooperative and peaceful relationships between labor and industry in the post-war period depend on extension of the processes of collective bargaining throughout all of industry and the mutual recognition by business and by organized labor of each others' rights. For many years, long before the war started, unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor have negotiated contracts with employers under which strikes are banned for the duration of the agreement and a system of voluntary arbitration of disputes is set up. Agreements of this kind are the only real, substantial and effective insurance against strikes that can be maintained in time of peace.

No Shipbuilding Cutbacks Planned, Land Declares, Blasting Rumors

Washington, D. C.—Rumors that merchant ship construction would be cut back soon were vigorously denied by Chairman Emory S. Land of the U. S. Maritime Commission, who declared that war needs will require even more shipbuilding than before.

His statement, of particular interest to all shipyard workers, follows:

"An epidemic of irresponsible rumors seems to have invaded most of the major shipyards of the United States. These rumors are to the effect that the Maritime Commission's construction program is about to be cut. The persistence of such rumors suggests to me that the source might be interested in sabotaging the shipbuilding program at the most crucial point in the war by seeking to drive skilled workmen from the shipyards to look for employment elsewhere.

"Let me say emphatically that the work load in the shipyards is to be increased very shortly and not decreased or cut back. Our current construction program and its projection into 1945 is based upon firm recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The joint chiefs are urging us to increase our current efforts to deliver ships in every possible way their present requirements exceed existing contracts for the most important types of ships in the program.

"It may be said, therefore, that within a few weeks additional work loads will be placed upon most of the major yards. This is, of course, contrary to current gossip, so I would like to say to every worker, man and woman, in these yards that the job has not been finished. It is not likely at this time to be finished within any period that we can foresee definitely. Consequently, I am asking—I am urging—that every man and every woman in those yards turn a deaf ear to the fakers who would mislead you. Stay in there and continue to pitch as you have done so handsomely in the past.

"Keep fighting in the shipyards so that the lads overseas can keep fighting in every theater of war that your ships are supplying with what it takes to make that fight total victory. There is plenty more work to be done. Stick by the ship and do it!"

Small Businessmen Are Getting Rich But Not Workers, Survey Reveals

Washington, D. C.—Where are the war profits going? Who is getting the dough?

A few weeks ago the Securities and Exchange Commission made public a survey of 450,000 corporations which showed that their working capital had increased to 17 billion dollars—a rise of nearly 70 percent—between 1939 and 1944.

Now the Department of Commerce publishes another analysis which indicates that more than half of the increase of eight billion dollars in demand deposits of individuals in banks during the year was accounted for by owners of small, unincorporated businesses.

The survey also shows that deposits made by war workers, civilian goods workers and clerical employes registered a comparatively minor increase during the year, amounting to only 500 million dollars for the whole country, half of which was accounted for by war workers.

The analysis from which these significant figures were obtained was prepared by Irwin Friend, of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

It showed that farmers had increased their bank deposits by 800 million dollars. The relative increase for small business men and farmers was 70 percent each.

Another interesting disclosure was that owners of unincorporated retail stores, who have been squawking loudest about price control, have been making heavy bank deposits. This group accounts for 45 percent of the total of 11 billion dollars in deposits of all small businessmen as of the end of the last fiscal year.

Among individuals other than small businessmen and farmers two groups found important in terms of demand deposits were executives with 18 percent of the deposits of this group and retired persons with 16 percent of such deposits.

Professional persons—doctors, dentists, engineers, lawyers, accountants and teachers—also held substantial amounts of demand deposits and together accounted for close to 22 percent of the total deposits of individuals other than small businessmen and farmers. Lawyers were the most important in this group and doctors second, with 9 and 6 percent, respectively.

Ten AFL Platform Planks Demand Post-War Security

Text of AFL Platform Proposals

Chicago.—Text of the American Federation of Labor's proposals presented to the Resolutions Committee of the Republican National Convention here follows:

International

Labor expresses the hope that one of the objectives reached at the conclusion of the war which is now being waged will be the end of wars and the substitution therefor of national and individual security. In order to accomplish this purpose, we recommend that at the peace conference an international organization be formed around the nucleus of the United Nations to establish the peace, safeguard the peace, and to enforce the peace if necessary. Such an agency can be created without the surrender of national sovereignty and through its functional capacity can serve to promote and maintain peace, guarantee freedom and justice for all.

Reconstruction

We have reached that stage in the war where the problems of reconversion and contract termination compel attention and consideration. We cannot ignore the economic consequences which we anticipate will follow the close of the war. The reconversion of industry from war material production to civilian production plants should be brought about as quickly and as constructively as possible in order to prevent widespread unemployment. Plans for reconversion and contract termination should be formulated and agencies for reconstruction should be created for the purpose of dealing with these vital postwar problems. In order to promote the realization of this objective, we urge the enactment of legislation which will provide:

First, for the creation of an Office of War Economic Mobilization and Reconstruction with a Policy and Review Board made up of representatives of labor, industrial management and farmers.

Second, that wartime restrictions on manpower and wages shall be promptly terminated at the close of the war and that an effective peacetime employment service be established on a national basis which will in no way interfere with employment policies established through collective bargaining.

Third, for the creation of an emergency unemployment fund out of which unemployment benefits shall be paid to unemployed workers and demobilized soldiers. Labor regards this as a national responsibility.

Fourth, for demobilization payments to be made to those serving in the armed forces with the opportunity extended them to continue interrupted education and training, and with adequate medical care and rehabilitation provisions for the injured.

Fifth, for the resumption of operations by private business, facilitated by having in operation plans and provisions for:

a. negotiation of contract cancellation,
b. prompt settlement of claims,
c. removal of government property from plants,
d. disposition of government surplus property in an orderly manner designed to protect our home economy.

Full Employment, Wages and Hours, Public Works, Housing

Congress and the Executive Departments should cooperate in the creation of full employment for all. Full employment and maximum production will serve to enable our own country to meet its financial obligations and assist other countries in the development of stable, sound economic plans. We can achieve full employment and full production only through adequate planning and coordinated undertakings.

The change from a wartime to a peacetime economy will increase the necessity for the establishment and maintenance of a shorter work week, not to exceed 40 hours. The payment of high wages should be correlated with the maintenance of this standard work week in order to maintain an adequate national income and assure the purchasing power necessary to sustain high levels of production.

A federal program of needed public works should be launched and should be awarded to private contractors in order to supplement employment in private industry during reconversion.

We urge the adoption of a comprehensive housing program designed to provide suitable homes for the families of our citizens—this program to include slum clearance and the construction of low-cost homes for low-income families. There is a great social and economic need for the preparation and launching of a most comprehensive national housing program.

Taxes

We urge the development of a simple, easily understood, reasonable, national taxation policy. As postwar years will bring high budgets, business, as well as individuals, will be forced to include sizable allocation of income for tax payments. We urge reasonable, fair, and just exemptions for low-income families in order to assure decent standards of living and to enable wage earners to make contributions to social insurance funds.

Federal Employes

We urge the establishment and maintenance of a shorter work week not to exceed 40 hours and more adequate compensation, with a better functioning Civil Service Commission, for federal employes.

National Labor Relations Act

Time and experience have shown that the National Labor Relations Act should be amended so as to require the National Labor Relations Board to carry out both the spirit and purposes of the Act. The workers should be clothed with authority to determine for themselves the kind and character of a collective bargaining agent which would be suitable and serviceable to them. The National Labor Relations Board should be deprived of authority to arbitrarily determine the kind of collective bargaining agent for the workers employed in a plant and instead it should be conferred upon the workers themselves. This was the original purpose of the Act. It provides for democratic procedure rather than autocratic and dictatorial control.

Education

We urge the establishment of equal educational opportunities for all boys and girls. This is a basic right which they should be permitted to enjoy. Federal contributions in order to create and establish opportunities in states of low average incomes is one way through which this objective may be realized. We urge Congress to endorse this policy with safeguards to protect local controls over education and religious teaching. We urge the expansion and broad extension of our educational facilities so that there may be opportunity for education and uninterrupted training.

We further urge the adoption of ample adult educational facilities so that all may enjoy opportunities which will enable them to deal with the changing problems of life constructively.

We urge early enactment of a policy of federal aid to our public school system.

Department of Labor

It is essential in the promotion of our national well being, in the establishment of a favorable labor psychology, in securing fair and sound labor relations, and in the administration of the affairs of an important agency of the National Government that the Department of Labor be reorganized and that all administrative agencies dealing with labor matters be coordinated and placed in the Department under a Secretary satisfactory to labor and really representative of the interests of labor. Such a Department, adequately financed could widely promote the interests of the wage earners of the country and thus make effective the functions of the Department as set forth in the Act authorizing the Department of Labor to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment.

Social Security

The enactment of sound, comprehensive social security legislation is a matter of prime importance. We can keep pace with the social needs of an increasing population, changing economic and industrial conditions, and increase devotion and loyalty to our democratic processes if we face the need for the enactment of adequate social security legislation in a brave and courageous way. The American Federation of Labor calls for the enactment of a form of social security legislation which provides for the establishment of a national system of social insurance upon a contributory basis—the social security benefits thus provided for to be paid to workers during emergencies which interfere with their earned income when employed. The emergencies referred to are loss of work, physical inability to do productive work because of short-time illness, long-time or permanent disability due to disease or old age.

The American Federation of Labor Social Security Program is incorporated in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill now pending in the Congress of the United States. We respectfully urge that it be approved by your Committee and by the Convention.

Repeal of Smith-Connally Act

We especially request that your Convention adopt a declaration favoring the repeal of the Smith-Connally Act.

Green Tells GOP Convention What Labor Wants In Next Four Years

Chicago.—Sounding a keynote for full post-war security for the American people, the American Federation of Labor's platform recommendations were submitted by President William Green to a friendly and responsive Republican National Convention.

The ten planks embraced a broad program designed to accord the common people of the country security from future war, security from unemployment and security from social evils.

In conformity with the Federation's non-partisan political policy, Mr. Green will present the same recommendations to the Democratic National Convention when it meets here July 19.

And because of the AFL's non-partisan political policy, the proposals voiced by Mr. Green were given close and sympathetic attention by the Republican leaders gathered here, who are "burned up" by the sharply partisan activities of the CIO in the Presidential campaign.

Evidence of this attitude was reflected in the favorable comment of members of the convention's Resolutions Committee upon two particular planks. The first called for amendment of the National Labor Relations Act to permit craft workers to decide for themselves whether they wish to be included in a single collective unit covering all employes in a plan or whether they wish their own group unit. The second demanded appointment of a Secretary of Labor who really represents the workers and who will be capable of reorganizing the Department of Labor so that the functions of all Federal agencies dealing with labor can be coordinated.

But Mr. Green placed chief emphasis on the AFL's security program. The first recommendation asked for the formation of an international organization, after victory of the United Nations, to "establish the peace, safeguard the peace, and enforce the peace, if necessary."

To attain job security in America, Mr. Green proposed a five-point plan aimed at protecting human rights as well as property rights in the reconversion period. Included in this plan was legislation to create a central office of Economic Mobilization and Reconstruction, with representation for labor and other functional groups; repeal of war-time restrictions on manpower and wages immediately after the war; establishment of a national employment service; benefits to disemployed workers and demobilized soldiers to be paid out of an emergency unemployment fund until they can find new jobs; a comprehensive veterans' program and prompt action to facilitate speedy reconversion by industry from war-time to peace-time production.

In the direction of long range social security, Mr. Green urged the adoption, with bi-partisan support, of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, which will make social security available to many million Americans now excluded, increase benefits, federalize unemployment compensation and provide sick, disability and maternity benefits.

Mr. Green stressed the position of labor that the change from a war-time to a peace-time economy will require a return to a shorter work week, not to exceed forty hours, with the payment of high wages to assure the purchasing power necessary to sustain high levels of production.

He said the Government can help the efforts of private industry to provide jobs for all by launching a comprehensive public works and housing program, to be carried out by private contractors.

Supporting demands for a simplified and easily understood tax system, Mr. Green warned that fair exemptions should be accorded to low-income families in order to maintain living standards.

He insisted that Government employes are deserving of better treatment, both with regard to pay and conditions of employment.

Federal contributions to establish wider educational opportunities to all American boys and girls was emphatically recommended.

Finally, Mr. Green demanded immediate repeal of the obnoxious Connally-Smith Act which, he charged, violates the basic rights of workers and constitutes an insult to the patriotic record of American labor in the war.

SEND MORE SMOKES TO MEN OVERSEAS

Washington, D. C.—President William Green appealed to all AFL members to send twice as many union label cigarettes to servicemen overseas in the months to come as before.

He pointed out that Secretary of War Stimson has announced that the number of men in our armed forces overseas will be doubled this year.

The men in uniform deeply appreciate these gifts of union label cigarettes, as is evidenced by their many letters, and the Union Label Trades Department's drive to supply these free smokes to servicemen is "spreading good will for organized labor," Mr. Green said.